

Message Text

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62

ACTION SCI-06

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USEC FOR AEC

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, ENRG, GW

SUBJECT: LASER FUSION RESEARCH IN FRG

REF: ROUSSO-MCCLELLAND TELCONS

1. SUMMARY. PER REF TELCONS, EMBASSY S&T COUNSELOR REVIEWED WITH APPROPRIATE FRG TECHNOLOGY MINISTRY OFFICIALS STATUS OF LASER FUSION RESEARCH AT INSTITUTE FOR PLASMA PHYSICS (IPP), GARCHING. END SUMMARY.

2. AS CONSEQUENCE OF PERSONNEL CUTS (3 PERCENT PER YEAR FOR TWO YEARS) AT "BIG SCIENCE" INSTITUTES IN FRG, IPP FACED LOSS OF APPROXIMATELY 75 POSITIONS. IPP MANAGEMENT DECIDED, THEREFORE, TO CONCENTRATE ON MAGNETIC CONFINEMENT TECHNOLOGIES FOR CONTROLLED THERMONUCLEAR FUSION R&D AND TO ABANDON THEIR RELATIVELY SMALL PROGRAM OF LASER FUSION R&D. LATTER PROGRAM WAS FUNDED AT ROUGHLY 5-7 OF IPP BUDGET -- LESS THAN DM 5 MILLION.

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3. TECHNOLOGY MINISTRY WAS NOT RPT NOT VERY HAPPY

ABOUT THIS DECISION. PROJECT OFFICERS BELIEVED THAT LASER FUSION MIGHT WELL CONTRIBUTE TO SOLUTION OF SOME CTR PROBLEMS. MINISTRY NOTED THAT HIGH-POWER LASERS, AS REQUIRED FOR CTR RESEARCH, ALSO HAD UTILITY IN OTHER APPLICATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY, MINISTRY IS CONSIDERING CREATION OF LABORATORY FOR HIGH-POWER LASER R&D. LABORATORY MIGHT HAVE ABOUT 100 PEOPLE. THREE-FIFTHS OF EFFORT WOULD BE DEVOTED TO HIGH-POWER LASER DEVELOPMENT; ONE-FIFTH TO LASER FUSION RESEARCH AND ONE-FIFTH TO "CHEMICAL APPLICATIONS" INCLUDING LASER ISOTOPE SEPARATION. DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO ESTABLISH THIS LABORATORY IS EXPECTED BEFORE END 1974.

4. PENDING THIS DECISION, IPP HAS REQUESTED PERMISSION TO KEEP THEIR LASER FUSION GROUP INTACT BECAUSE IT WOULD BE INEFFICIENT TO DISBAND AND DISPERSE A GROUP LATER NEEDED AT NEW HIGH-POWER LASER R&D FACILITY. TECHNOLOGY MINISTRY PLANS TO APPROVE IPP REQUEST AND TECHMIN OFFICIALS SEEM CONFIDENT THAT LASER R&D FACILITY WILL ALSO BE APPROVED ALTHOUGH ITS SIZE, LOCATION, ETC. ARE STILL OPEN QUESTIONS.

5. FOREGOING CONSIDERED RATHER SENSITIVE FROM INTERNAL FRG POLICY VIEWPOINT PENDING FINAL DECISIONS. REQUEST THAT THIS STATUS REPORT AND PROGNOSIS BY TECH MIN REPS BE USED FOR BACKGROUND ONLY.
HILLENBRAND

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